



Ms. Karen G. Sabasteanski  
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality  
P.O. Box 1105  
Richmond, VA 23218

RE: Proposed regulations to Reduce and Cap Carbon Dioxide from Fossil Fuel Fired Electric Power Generating Facilities

Dear Ms. Sabasteanski:

The Virginia Conservation Network ("VCN") and the Virginia League of Conservation ("VaLCV") Voters are pleased to submit the following comments on the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality ("DEQ") proposed regulations to "Reduce and Cap Carbon Dioxide ("CO2") from Fossil Fuel Fired Electric Power Generating Facilities."

We would like to applaud DEQ for working closely with both Governors Northam and McAuliffe, as well as their respective administrations, to address carbon emissions in the Commonwealth. Thanks to your work, Virginia has the opportunity to be a leader in the fight to stop climate change.

We are grateful for your work to review the thousands of comments that will be submitted by Virginians on this issue. As two of the leading statewide conservation organizations - representing over 100 conservation groups and thousands of Virginians - we wanted to highlight the three priority issues identified by the conservation community surrounding the draft rules:

**1. The selected 2020 initial baseline should best reduce carbon emissions.**

VCN and the Virginia League of Conservation Voters encourage DEQ to select an emissions baseline that best achieves the Department's goals of reducing statewide carbon pollution. This baseline should be the most stringent, lowest possible science-based figure supported by modeling.

For additional details on the stringency of the carbon, as well as modeling results, please see the technical comments from our Partners at the Natural Resources Defense Council, Sierra Club, and Southern Environmental Law Center.

**2. The final regulation should include all electric power facilities that emit carbon dioxide, regardless of fuel type.**

As two of the leading conservation organizations in the Commonwealth, we are thankful that the proposed regulations cover both current and future fossil fuel-fired units. Additionally, we were glad to see the inclusion of co-firing units that include at least one fossil fuel-fired unit. However, in order for these regulations to be comprehensive and environmentally effective, they should include all electric power facilities that emit carbon, regardless of fuel type. Specifically, the regulations should apply to any unit at or above 25 MW that burns biomass.

For additional details on solutions to the inclusion of biomass, please refer to the technical comments submitted by the National Wildlife Federation.

**3. Set asides for carbon abatement should be no lower than 5%.**

Our respective organizations appreciate and support the 5% set aside of allowances to assist the Virginia Department of Mines Minerals and Energy (DMME) in efforts to address and abate carbon emissions. We encourage DEQ to consider increasing this allotment to 10%, with the understanding the benefits of increasing this figure should be greater than the costs associated for covered sources.

The conservation community looks forward to engaging in the regulatory process associated with these set asides. We would gladly participate in any stakeholder groups or technical panels, as appropriate.

**Conclusion**

VCN and VaLCV are thankful for the opportunity to weigh in on these proposed regulations. This climate action plan will have long-lasting effects on Virginian's environment and families. We look forward to working closely with DEQ and the Northam administration to ensure the final policy is based in science and will put us on a path to fully address our carbon emissions.

Respectfully,



Mary Rafferty  
Executive Director | Virginia Conservation Network



Mike Town  
Executive Director | Virginia League of Conservation Voters